

14 July 2011

From the editor-in-chief
Kings Place, 90 York Way,
London N1 9GU

Dick Fedorcio
Director of Public Affairs
Metropolitan Police
New Scotland Yard
London
SW1H 0BG

Dear Dick,

Paul Stephenson and you came in to meet me and Paul Johnson in my office on December 10 2009. Among the things we discussed was the Commissioner's strong feeling that Nick Davies's coverage of phone-hacking was over-egged and incorrect.

In February 2010 you wrote to me complaining that another Nick Davies story "once again presents an inaccurate position from our perspective and continues the imply this case has not been handled properly and we are party to a conspiracy." [That story revealed how three mobile phone companies had discovered that more than 100 customers' voicemail had been accessed by Glenn Mulcaire and Clive Goodman]. You suggested a follow-up meeting with Assistant Commissioner John Yates.

That meeting took place on February 19. John Yates also tried to persuade us that Nick's doggedness and persistence in pursuing the story was misplaced.

I was surprised to learn tonight that in October 2009 you had hired Neil Wallis, Andy Coulson's deputy editor of the NotW from 2003, who remained an executive at the paper until 2009. He was thus in a senior position at the time that phone-hacking was taking place. He was arrested in this connection by Operation Weeting today.

Your statement this afternoon says that Wallis was advising Paul and John on PR activity and strategic communication advice from October 2009 to September 2010. I assume he reported to you.

Can I ask:

1. Why did you not think it appropriate to tell me at the time of these meetings that you, Paul and John were being advised by Coulson's former deputy?

2. What advice did he give you about how the coverage of phone-hacking?
3. Was Wallis consulted in advance of these meetings or subsequently informed of the nature or contents of our discussions?
4. Why did you think it was appropriate to hire Wallis, given his closeness to events which the Guardian and other media organizations were reporting at the time?
5. What conversations – formal or informal – did you, Paul or John have with Wallis about the subject of the NotW and phone hacking during the period he was working?

I look forward to hearing from you tomorrow.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan Rusbridger', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Alan Rusbridger